



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**

# Corps Points!

US Army Corps of Engineers, Public Affairs Office

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*A weekly compendium of facts and talking points to help tell the Corps story*

## Hurricane Katrina

*Information is current as of 7 September 2005*

### The Overall Mission

We are working in support of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

### **The three priorities for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are:**

First, supporting efforts to save lives and find people;

Second, sustaining lives (water and shelter), and,

Third, setting conditions for recovery (cleaning up and restoring infrastructure, and navigation).

More than 1,000 Corps employees are on the ground actively engaged in supporting FEMA missions as well as those missions under our own authorities and, many more Corps employees are engaged from their own duty locations. We also have many contractors and retired military officers -- including a World War II veteran -- and more than 500 Corps civilian retirees who have volunteered to return to services. Industry partners have flooded us with offers to help, as well as multiple stakeholder groups in navigation, flood and storm water management, construction, and engineering, and federal partners like the Bureau of Land Management have offered to join us, just as they did during the Florida hurricanes last year.

We are on the ground and working in the following areas:

**Ice mission:** 4,676 trucks of ice (187,040,000 pounds) are under contract. In the past 24 hours, 640,000 pounds of ice were distributed.

**Emergency power mission:** The power planning and response team is mobilizing to a new station area in Hammond. Assessments are being performed at New Orleans Airport, the Navy Yard, New Orleans Convention Center, and several more.

The 249<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion (Prime Power) is working on 5.2 megawatt generators for pumping plants to un-water New Orleans.

**Water mission:** 474 trucks (10,238,400 liters) of bottled water have been delivered to the staging area, and 518,400 liters distributed.

**Temporary roofing mission:** So far the temporary roofing planning and response team has been activated, roofing teams have arrived from Baton Rouge, and the team is determining warehouse sites for material storage.

**Temporary housing:** The Temporary Housing planning and response team has activated and deployed. There are no housing taskers yet. The Memphis District team is working on a Catastrophic Housing Plan for 50,000 Mississippi citizens.

**Debris mission:** The planning and response team is scoping activities for the debris mission.

**Deployable Tactical Operations Center (DTOC):** One DTOC facility is operating at the Port Allen Lock, and one is at Camp Beauregard.

**Quarter Boat Mission:** Quarter boats to provide lodging and work space for emergency responders have arrived at Port Allen Lock.

**Unwatering Mission:** The mission is to assist the State of Louisiana by performing or contracting for un-watering New Orleans and the greater metropolitan area. So far \$50 million has been provided for this mission with three contracts awarded.

The Corps also has made great progress in the levee repair and un-watering operations in New Orleans. The 17th Street Canal Breach has been closed, except for a 40-foot opening in the middle of the outflow wall to allow the pumping station to come online. Estimates about how long it will take to get the water out of New Orleans are very difficult because conditions are changing daily. As more power is restored, more pump stations become operational, and as temporary pumps are placed, we get closer to making the city dry again. As of 6 p.m. 7 Sep 23 pumps were operational.

Right now our best estimates range from 24 to 80 days for getting water out of the city, but there is no way to predict timeframes for when specific areas will be dry. We want to be very careful about giving timeframes because we know there are many people, including employees of our New Orleans District, who want to know when they can return to their homes and businesses.

Another related concern is about the quality of water being moved from New Orleans to Lake Ponchartrain. However, our first priority remains the health and safety of residents and responders as we get the water out of the city. We have received approval from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to move these waters, which are being tested and monitored. As we drain the water, we anticipate that there will be some times when we may need to take additional measures, and we are working that right now as well.

**Reconstitution of New Orleans District:** Our first concern is to account for all of the New Orleans District personnel. We have confirmed the whereabouts of about 92 percent of our employees and are waiting for the remaining folks to make contact. We are continuing to develop Reconstitution Plans for the district. Several options for reconstituting the district are under consideration, including delegating the district's functions to other districts until the district comes back online. New Orleans District employees are on excused absence and should continue to update contact information and notify the district of their availability for work in other geographic locations. The CEMVN Web page at <http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil> is being updated daily.

The Office of Personnel Management has established a program for those federal employees who wish to donate annual leave to other employees so federal employees hit by Hurricane Katrina can get time off from work without having to use their own paid leave, or to have extra leave if they use up their own leave. Use this form: [http://www.opm.gov/forms/pdf\\_fill/opm1638.pdf](http://www.opm.gov/forms/pdf_fill/opm1638.pdf) and submit to your human resources office.

Employees who are interested in donating money for Corps employees affected by Hurricane Katrina will be able to do so through an agreement that is being set up with the Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund. More details will follow.

**Message from the Chief:** "Despite their personal losses and hardships, the New Orleans District and Mississippi Valley Division team summoned the courage and commitment to focus on the needs of others in spite of their personal losses and hardships. I have absolute confidence in our team. We are doing the right things in the right ways," said Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock, Chief of Engineers.